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THE VAN DYCK EXPOSITION AT ANTWERP.

To the Editor of THE COLLECTOR AND ART CRITIC.

Sir: A few visits to this grand array of productions from the variegated brush of the greatest disciple of Rubens are most impressive. The excellent hanging of the pictures upon an olive-green background, with plenty of wall space around them, is admirable. Although the best work of Van Dyck is not here, for nothing has been sent from the Hermitage or Genoa, still the committee has succeeded in gathering over a hundred paintings. Twelve came from the museum at Antwerp, twelve from Brussels, seven from churches, while England sent thirty-nine, France sixteen, Austria five, Germany four, Poland six, Holland one, Russia two, and Italy four. As it is supposed that there are at least 350 canvases of Van Dyck in England, it will be seen that much that might have enriched this exhibition is absent.

Still, it is a great study to witness the different styles in which Van Dyck worked. He changed many times not only his manner but also his color. There are here portraits which might be confounded with those of Rubens, Virgins which might have been painted by the Italians, and again in some of his English work his color is dull, although never losing his dream of elegance—yet spite of all he is ever himself. Van Dyck was of an exceedingly nervous temperament, and his hand as impressionable as his spirit. Here we see a portrait which is gross, and in which the matter transcends the soul; there one in which color, style, touch, all is changed, painted with rapid strokes, with breadth, with the disdain of finish of the most modern work; then again in his English period he may be most complete, even labored, the nuance of tints melting, delicate in delineation of textures, deep in his backgrounds. Van Dyck had never the sureness of instinct which Rubens possessed, he was too many-sided. Yet the fire of his genius is ever bright and flashing.

I rather give this impression of the master, produced by a survey of all the work shown here, than a *Catalogue raisonné*.

There are also shown over 400 photographs, gravures and etchings, which render complete this homage of posterity to the great Flemish master.

P. N. DE VRIES.

Antwerp, Aug. 18, 1899.

Art Notes.

One of the most interesting of the coterie that styles itself "The Ten American Painters" is Frank W. Benson, who was met recently by a correspondent somewhere on the New England coast, where he was painting whatever appealed to his fancy. His duties as instructor of the life classes at the Museum of Fine Arts, together with numerous portrait commissions, have been so confining that he finds great enjoyment just now in roaming among unworked scenery and recording the impressions of the hour. His figure and portrait work is attracting ever-increased attention, while among the interesting contributions to the Congressional Library seven mural paintings—the Four Seasons and three panels representing the Graces—are from his brush. His "Portrait of a Boy" was purchased in 1897 by the Carnegie Gallery for the Chronological Collection. Several honors have deservedly come to him.

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Posterdom is at last waking up. It is with pleasure that more artistic productions are seen on the hoardings. The Hyomei posters are a step in advance, as were the Brighton Beach annoucements of Payne's electric display. The "Wanamaker" sheets at the Elevated Railroad stations are generally tasteful, and the theatres are following suit. An imported drawing by John Hassall, the English artist, gives a striking scene from "The Only Way"; the posters for Crane's "Peter Stuyvesant" and Broadhurst's "Why Smith Left Home" are attractive, and *mirabile dictu*, even Charles Frohman has left the upper case fat type and presents Annie Russell's announcement in an artistic manner.

The brothers Leyendecker are turning out some remarkably clever posters in Chicago.

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A coincidence of fate occurred in the death of two of the sculptors engaged on the Dewey arch, Caspar Buberl being followed within a few days by Giovanni Turini into the dark valley. Buberl was a sculptor of the old school, following the classic lines of Rome, and best known for the many military statues which he executed after the Civil War, especially noteworthy being the bronze work and medals for the New York State monument on the battlefield of Gettysburg. The frieze in bas relief, 1,100 feet long and three feet

wide, representing the story of the Civil War, which adorns the Pension Office at Washington, and the bas reliefs on the Garfield Memorial in Lake View Cemetery, Cleveland, are of his hands.

Turini was born in Italy, and came to this country after serving under Garibaldi. He is best known as the author of the Bolivar statue in Central Park, although more creditable work was turned out by him.

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And when going to press information comes of the demise of a third artist engaged on the preparations for the Dewey festivities. Frank E. Crane was busily occupied with decorative propositions for the great gala days, when death called him. He was one of the most distinguished designers in his artistic line.

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A subscriber sent me recently, with his compliments, an interesting little volume, published by Johnston, of Edinburgh (Scribner, New York), entitled "The Scottish Clans and their Tartans." The interesting history of the thirty-one clans is accompanied with colored plates of the tartans used by the Highlanders, some clans having from one to five various tartans, such as the common clan tartan, the Chief's tartan, worn only by himself and heir, the Dress tartan, the Hunting tartan, and Mourning tartan. These plates are considered to be absolutely correct, having been taken thread by thread from the actual cloth, not from any previously printed work.

Many of these tartans must have been in existence as early as the XVth century, as there is in existence a charge and discharge of John, Bishop of Glasgow, Treasurer to King James III., 1471: "Ane elne and ane halve of blue Tartane, to lyne his gowne of cloth of gold £1, 10s. (Scots); four elne and one halve of Tartane, for a sparworf abouin his credill, price ane elne 10s. £2, 5s." It is therefore surprising to note how perfectly the laws of elementary and complementary colors seem to have been understood. The simultaneous contrast, the orchestration of colors, is carried out perfectly, and it were well if these Scotch tartans were studied by those who are searching for the secrets of optical mixture.

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The series of drawings which Will H. Low finished some time ago to illustrate a new edition of that mournful tale which Keats sang about the maiden Lamia is on exhibition at the Detroit Museum of Art. The artist does not present her in the repulsive guise of the old mythological story, but pictures her as an innocent, loving maiden, fair enough to win the youth Lycius. The pure beauty and free conception of these drawings show the warm sympathy Low felt for his subject, and reveal his breadth of artistic genius, which is not alone confined to the mural decorative work for which he is best known.

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There is apparent an increasing interest in pictures of the American aborigines. Poor Lo is being portrayed in all the glory of his warpaint and stolid physiognomy. Burbank, Cameron, Coose, Remington, Farney, Sharpe, have greatly contributed to immortalize the Indian before the onslaught of civilization and rum will make him a memory. The Chicago publication "Brush and Pencil," which gives a monthly lithograph of Rain-in-the-Face, Spotted-Dog, Zi-You-Wee-Teh-Ze-Sah, and other worthies, has done much to arouse interest in this ethnological study.

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The September "Salt-Water Number" of the *Century* contains an appreciative short note on Winslow Homer, "A Painter of the Sea," by Wm. A. Coffin. The excellent series of pen and ink and wash drawings, illustrative of Mrs. Van Rensselaer's articles on the French Cathedrals, by Joseph Pennell, adds greatly to his fame, those in the present number being remarkably beautiful; perspective difficulties are overcome with ease, while the selection is picturesque and thoroughly in harmony with the facile pen of the author.

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Catalogues Nos. 160 and 161 are to hand from Bernard Quaritch giving a list with prices affixed of some illuminated and decorated mediæval manuscripts, rare and valuable books relating to the fine arts and of the library of M. Ch. Schaefer. Booklovers might find something of interest in Mr. Quaritch's offers.

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It is rumored that Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, who is known as a bibliophile, is the owner of a fine copy of the Mazarin Bible. This, if true, gives us five in New York, the oldest being the one owned by Mr. James Lenox. The Hamilton Cole-Brayton Ives copy has now come back, brought by Mr. James W. Ellsworth.